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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

A STUDY OF IQBĀL'S VIEWS ON MUSLIM RATIONALISM

MAZHERUDDĪN SIDDĪQĪ

Discussing the causes which reduced the Law of Islam practically to a state of immobility, Iqbāl expresses the opinion[1] that "partly owing to a misunderstanding of the ultimate motives of Rationalism, and partly owing to the unrestrained thought of particular Rationalists, conservative thinkers regarded this movement as a force of disintegration and considered it a danger to the stability of Islam as a social polity. Their main purpose, therefore, was to preserve the social integrity of Islam and to realize this the only course open to them was to utilize the binding force of the Sharī'at and to make the structure of their legal system as rigorous as possible."

In his doctoral thesis, "The Development of Metaphysics in Persia," Iqbāl has something more to say with regard to the motives of the rationalists and the anti-rationalists. The dialectic of Rationalism, he adds,[2] destroyed the personality of God, and reduced divinity to a bare indefinable universality. The anti-rationalist movement, on the other hand, though it preserved the dogma of personality, destroyed the external reality of nature. "In spite of Nazzām's theory of "Atomic objectification", the atom of the Rationalist possesses an independent objective reality; that of the Ash'arite is a fleeting moment of Divine will. The one saves nature, and tends to do away with the God of Theology; the other sacrifices nature to save God as conceived by the orthodox."[3]

Iqbāl's conclusion that the Rationalists (the M'uṭazilah) were trying to save nature is only one aspect of the intellectual activity of the M'utazilah. The M'utazilah tried to do much else. In the beginning their main effort was directed to defending Islam against the attacks of its opponents.

The Beginning of the M'utazilah:

Recent historical research has revealed, writes Dr. Faẓlur Raḥmān,[4] that the M'utazilah were a group of Muslim intellectuals, who in an arena of great ideological conflict in the Middle East in the early centuries of Islam, had successfully defended Islam against Gnosticism, Christianity,

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Zoroastrianism and Buddhism. They were no mere intellectual idlers. One of the weapons with which they defended Islam, adds the writer, was the doctrine of human free-will and responsibility which they sought to formulate in terms of the current stock of philosophical ideas of Greek origin.

Another view as to the origin of the M'utazilah is that they were engaged primarily in refuting the Mujassamah (Anthropomorphists) who entered the fold of Islam from many directions. Thus, the extremists among the Shī'ā held the view that God had a (physical stature and a concrete) form, and that he is an (actual) body with limbs. Many story-tellers popularised traditions in which God was described more or less in human terms with human attributes derogatory to divine majesty. But the M'utazilah went to the other extreme in upholding divine majesty and His freedom from purely human attributes. They almost denuded God of every attribute and left Him bare of everything except His essence.

Side by side with their refutation of the anthropomorphists, the M'utazilah sought to refute the Mujbarah (predeterminists) and some of the extremists among the Shī'ā who held that God was capable of doing injustice to men. Among the Mujbarah (predeterminists), mention must be made of the Jahm b. Ṣafwān who headed the movement of predeterminism and went to extreme lengths in advocating the doctrine and "it has been proved on historical grounds that the early M'utazilites entered into polemics with the Jahmiyah and dissociated themselves from them."[6]

It is argued that in refuting their opponents the M'utazilah thought was imperceptibly influenced in some degree by the very ideas which they were seeking to counter. This is the view expressed by Dr. Nyberg[7] who says that this explains the weakness (Ḍuf) and diffidence (Taraddud) which marked the intellectual efforts of the M'utazilah. We do not, however, agree with his further remark that he who fights an enemy is bound to catch his spirit in some degree. Therefore, while the form of the M'utazilah dialectics must necessarily have been set by that of their opponents, since they could not choose their own plane of discussion, it is not necessary that they should have been materially influenced by the thought of their opponents. Their deviations from the path of moderation must have some other explanation, one of which certainly is, as Iqbāl has pointed out, that they ignored the facts of human nature and "strove to express faith in the form of concepts or terms of pure thought."[8]

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Naturalism of the M'utazilah

As pointed out by Iqbāl, the M'utazilah tried to save nature at the expense of God's personality. In substantiation of his argument, Iqbāl points out that the interest of Nazzām chiefly consisted in the exclusion of all arbitrariness from the orderly course of nature. The same interest in naturalism led Al-Jāḥiz to define will in a purely negative manner. "Though the rationalist thinkers did not want to abandon the idea of a personal will, yet they endeavoured to find a deeper ground for the independence of natural phenomena. And this ground they found in matter itself. Nazzām taught the infinite divisibility of matter, and obliterated the distinction between substance and accident."[9]

However, the pertinent question which comes up here is whether the M'utazilah began their dialectical career with a conscious attempt to exclude arbitrariness from nature or were led to such an attempt during the course of the development of their dialectics. It would be truer to say that their first endeavour was to uphold the free-will of man against the predestinarians, particularly the Jahmiyah. But as they progressed, they felt that man's free-will can be vindicated satisfactorily only by a denial of all divine intervention. In this they were certainly mistaken and were taking a course which was fundamentally opposed to the religious instincts of mankind. However, they carried their logic to its farthest limit, unmindful of what happened to religion and thus ended by becoming pure naturalists.

The M'utazilah Doctrine of Free-will

A curious consequence of their belief in human free-will was that the M'utazilah denied the power of God with regard to man's acts and the phenomena of nature. An extreme naturalism of this kind finds expression in the views held by Mu'ammar b. Abbād. According to al-Baghdādī,[10] "He was the head of the atheists and his aberrations are many, among which is his belief that God did not create any of the accidents. He created only substances. Then the substances created their own accidents which means that God did not create colour, or smell, heat or cold, humidity or dryness, motion or rest, sight or hearing, blindness or deafness, pleasure or pain, and health or disease."

We get a much more complete view of the M'utazilah stand with regard to the respective powers of God and man in Bāqilānī who says[11] that the entire body of the M'utazilah believed that God had no power

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over their small or great acts and that He gives them power over that with respect to which He himself has no power. This statement shows that the M'utazilah had come to hold the position taken by nineteenth-century deists. They believed in the initial power of God but denied His power to influence the course of events after He had created the world and man and vested them with powers and potencies natural to them. In other words, the world and man possessed the capacity for self-development and no longer needed divine help or guidance. This is exactly the conclusion arrived at by Iqbāl who says that[12] "the Rationalists were philosophically materialists, and theologically deists." No wonder that this trend of thought called forth a strong reaction, for if it had prevailed, it would have meant the end of all religion, not merely Islam.

This was really going too far and shows that in their desire to divest God of all His powers, the M'utazilah did not keep in view even the requirements of logical consistency, for power over something entails power over its opposite. When Nazzām says that God has no power over injustice and falsehood (that is, God cannot be unjust or false) it necessarily follows that He has no power over truth and justice (that is, God cannot do justice or be truthful).[14] In the same manner it can be argued that if God has power to cause men to disbelieve, He must have equal power to cause them to believe.

A more consistent argument to limit God's power was advanced by Abū-al-Hudhayl 'Allāf who held that there is a last limit for every eternal act of God. When that limit has been reached, God cannot be said to have any further power over any act, small or great.[15] On this basis, he argued that those who occupy the abode of bliss (Paradise) will remain in a state of quiescence in which they will enjoy no pleasure and will have no power—neither they nor their Creator—over anything, because as maintained Abū-al-Hudhayl, just as there is a first (limit) to every accident before which nothing can occur, so there is a last limit, after which nothing can come to pass.

This is very good so far as logic goes. But the Qur'ān says that God has unlimited power over everything and Abū-al-Hudhayl's logic would take away the power of God but this is repugnant to man's religious consciousness. Such attempts to apply the rigour of human logic to the things which do not fall strictly within its scope, merely demonstrate the fact that in dealing with the problems of theology, logic cannot be pushed too far without detriment to the fundamentals of religion.

In accordance with their general stand on the free-will of man, some of the M'utazilah began to ascribe to man power to do things which

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the Qur'ān had claimed to belong solely to the sphere of divine power and authority. Thus, the Qur'ān had said : "Thou didst not unite their hearts but God united them" (VIII : 62), but Hishām b. 'Amr al-Fūṭī said that men united their hearts voluntarily and of their own power and that God did not unite their hearts.[16] Similarly, he claimed that God does not approve of faith in the faithful and adorn their hearts therewith, though the Qur'ān says clearly, "He it is Who approved of faith in you and adorned your hearts therewith" (XLIX : 6). The M'utazilah interpreted the Qur'ānic verse, "Say : God, Thou art the owner of dominions, who givest dominion to whom-soever Thou likest, and takest away dominion from whomsoever Thou likest" (III : 25) in conformity with the general tenor of their thought. According to Rāzī, it was the opinion of K'aabī that this statement about degradation and elevation did not signify the exercise of divine power by voluntary choice. It meant that God elevated those who deserved elevation and degraded those who disobeyed His commands. In support of this, K'aabī quotes the Qur'ānic verses : "The wrong-doers cannot hope to benefit by My covenant." (II : 23) and "God preferred him above you and added to the stature of his knowledge and body." Jubbāī's opinion is also quoted by Rāzī that this statement about elevation is specific to just rulers and, as for unjust rulers, it is impossible that their dominion be God-given.

The M'utazilah Stand on the Divine Attributes

Before the rise of the Mu'tazilah, the Jahmiyah had started the general philosophical trend towards the negation of divine attributes. According to Shahrastānī,[18] the M'utazilah agreed with Jahmiyah in the latter's negation of the 'eternal' attributes of God. Among the assertions of the Jahmiyah was that those attributes which belong to the creation cannot be ascribed to God, because this leads to the resemblance of the Creator and the created. On this basis, they denied that God is living or that He is knowing. But they affirmed his being powerful, active and His being a creator, because nothing in His creation can be described as having the attributes of power, activity and creativity. The argument advanced by Jahm b. Ṣafwān was that "if God is said to have the attribute of eternal knowledge, then that knowledge would either be God or other than God. If the knowledge of God is other than God and it is also eternal, then this would amount to associating with God (an eternal other than Him), and if the knowledge of God is God, then God would be knowledge and this is rank atheism."[19]

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Some of the M'utazilah seemed to have followed the cue given by Jahm b. Ṣafwān. Although they did not deny that the attributes of God exist, they either lost sight of the distinction between God and His attributes or explained those attributes in negative terms. For example, Ash'arī says that Abū-al-Hudhayl maintained that God is knowing with a knowledge which is He Himself. All other attributes of God were explained in a similar manner. He further maintains, adds Ash'arī "when I say that God is knowing, I affirm for Him a knowledge which is He Himself and I negate from Him ignorance and I point to something known (to Him) either now or in future; when I say that He is powerful, I negate from Him weakness and I affirm for Him a power which is God Himself and I point to something over which He has power." He argued in a similar manner with regard to the attribute of life. M'uammar b. 'Abbād, another leading M'utazilite, maintained that God is knowing, but not with a knowledge, powerful but not with a power, living but not with a life, and so on. On the whole, the M'utazilah denied the eternal attributes (صفات ازليه) of God.[21]

In regard to God's attribute of speech (كلام), the M'utazilah followed the argument of Jahm b. Ṣafwān referred to above, namely, that if the knowledge of God is other than God and it is also eternal, then this would amount to associating with Him a being other than Him. Therefore, the speech of God, the M'utazilah maintained, could not be eternal, for if it were eternal, that would mean the association of God with another eternal. Further light on the subject is thrown by the following statement of Taftāzānī.[22]

"The M'utazilah adhered to the view that Tauḥīd (monotheism) is undermined by the affirmation of (eternal) attributes, because they (the attributes) come to occupy the position of eternal entities which possess the quality of otherness to God. Thus, there follows necessarily the eternity of beings other than God and a multiplicity of eternals. When the Christians fell into disbelief by affirming three eternals, what about the affirmation of eight eternals or more?"

Taftāzānī himself holds the Ash'arite view that the attributes of God are neither God nor other than God. In other words, they constitute neither His essence nor are other than His essence. Therefore, neither the eternity of entities other than God nor the multiplicity of such entities follows from this. About the Christians, Taftāzānī says that although they did not affirm eternal entities other than God, this necessarily followed from their standpoint, because they affirmed three persons, namely, Existence, Knowledge and Life and named them Father, Son,

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and the Holy Ghost, and they supposed that the second person, namely, Knowledge had assumed bodily form in Christ. Thus they allowed for the separation and transmission of attributes.

As with speech, so with regard to God's will, the M'utazilah stand was that the Divine will is originated. Referring to this stand of the M'utazilah, Ash'arī[24] asks them as to what the difference is between them and the Jahmiyah who said that God was knowing with a knowledge which was created. Ash'ari adds that if it was not possible for the *knowledge* of God to be created, as the M'utazilah believed, why did they not deny that His will was created and if their reply was that the *knowledge* of God could not be created, because this would require its origination by means of another knowledge and so on *ad infinitum*, then the same applies to the will of God, which could not be created, as this would necessitate that He is willing with a will which originated in another will.

It is clear from the foregoing discussion that although the M'utazilah started with very best of intentions, namely, that of defending Islamic monotheism, they pursued their logic without any thought of what ultimate effects it might produce in respect of the very objective which they were endeavouring to achieve. The explanation of God's attributes in negative terms meant that God lacked all positive attributes. This, as Iqbāl has remarked, reduced God to a bare universal. In denying positive divine attributes, the M'utazilah overlooked the fact that affirmation is more primary than negation, just as existence is prior to non-existence. In fact, non-existence owes its being to existence and not *vice versa*, just as the shadow owes its being to the sun and without the sun it could not be said to exist.

The M'utazilah stand on the relation of God's attributes and Hi essence was, however, based on more solid grounds and even the Ash'arites were forced to concede that there was no otherness in the divine attributes, although they held that the divine attributes were distinct from His essence. But 'distinctness' is not otherness. The whole problem seems to have been an artificial creation of needless abstraction. There could never be any question of association or shirk as the Jahmiyah maintained. If the eternal attributes of God are other than He, no association or shirk in the Islamic sense follows. When the Qur'ān uses the term association or shirk, it means something very different. Shirk really refers to the belief that there are other beings, animate or inanimate, who share with God the power that belongs to Him, or that He delegates any of His powers to such beings. But the attributes of God could not, by any stretch of imagination, be personalised and turned into co-sharers

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of His authority. Therefore, the danger sensed by the Jahmiyah and the M'utazilah was an imaginary one.

It is true, of course, that the Christians had hypostasized one of God's attributes and believed that Jesus Christ was the word of God made flesh, so that he shared divine authority with Him. But this danger of deifying the prophets had been sufficiently taken care of by the Qur'ān and the Prophet of Islam both of whom had stressed the latter's humanity in clear and unmistakable terms. Islamic monotheism was too well-grounded to be shaken by a few exercises in logic.

In so far as the problem of the relation of God's essence to His attributes is concerned, it troubled very few minds and it seems that much unnecessary intellectual effort was wasted on a problem, relatively simple. When we think of a person, we think of him with all his qualities. Recall to mind any historical figure, *e.g.*, Napoleon or Aurangzeb, immediately he stands before your mind's eye, not merely with his essence but also with his attributes. It is impossible to separate the two and it is a clear absurdity to maintain that attributes are separate from essence. However, when we discuss the different qualities of a person, we have to establish *at an* intellectual level, the distinction between him and his qualities. Therefore, the Ash'arite stand which is not very different from that of the M'utazilah that the attributes of God neither constitute the essence of God, nor are they other than He, must be upheld.

As regards the stand taken by the M'utazilah with respect to the createdness of the Qur'ān (the speech of God), it is clear that while they were actuated by the best of motives in their attempt to uphold the uniqueness of God, they overlooked the fact that their logic was dragging down the Qur'ān to the level of ordinary (created) things, which would have necessarily undermined the great respect in which the Qur'ān was held by the Muslim Community in general. God and His Book are intimately connected in the Islamic articles of faith. If a Muslim believes in God, as he should, but does not give much weight to the teachings of the Qur'ān, he cannot be considered a good Muslim. Mere belief in the uniqueness and unity of God leads nowhere if it is not followed up by respect for the word and guidance of God. The Muslim mind instinctively reacted against the M'utazilah doctrine of the createdness of the Qur'ān, because it felt the danger to the moral uprightness of the Muslim Community in a doctrine which debased the Qur'ān and brought it on a par with other created things. The real question about the Qur'ān was not whether it was created or uncreated but whether it was the speech of God revealed to the Prophet or the creation of the Prophet's own mind.

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If the Qur'ān is a revelation from God, it occupies a unique position and holds a status greater than that held by any created thing. This is the crux of the problem and although the M'utazilah did not discuss it, they threw their weight by implication on the other side, for this is what the doctrine of the createdness of the Qur'ān comes to.

Reaction Against the M'utazilah

The reaction against the M'utazilah came to surface when Al-Ash'arī forsook his teacher, Al-Jubbā'ī, and started his polemics against the school of thought to which he originally belonged. Ash'arī reaffirmed positive attributes for God and asserted that they were the eternal attributes of God which subsisted with God's essence. Ash'arī's argument for the eternal nature of divine attributes, such as speech and will was that God is the ruler of the world and a ruler is one who can command and prohibit. But He can be a commander either with a command which is eternal or one which is originated. If it is originated, it would either originate in His own essence, or in a locus. It is impossible that the command should originate in His essence, because then His essence would become a locus for accidents, and it is impossible that it should originate in a locus, for the locus would then be ascribed to Him, and it is equally impossible that it should originate in no locus, because this is irrational. Therefore, the command is eternal which subsists with Him and is one of His attributes.

Having reaffirmed the positive and eternal nature of the divine will. Ash'arī proceeded to demolish the M'utazilah conception of a limited God who had no power over evil and injustice and could not will them. The argument of the Ash'arite school in this regard has been briefly stated by Taftāzānī[26] as follows:—

"The M'utazilah denied the will of God with respect to evil and mischief until they began to maintain that God willed from the non-believer that He should believe and obey and not that He should disbelieve and disobey, thinking that any will with respect to what is bad and evil must itself be evil. But we do not subscribe to this view, because evil is the acquisition of the evil-doer and it should be ascribed to him alone. It follows from the M'utazilah stand that much of what God's creatures do, they do against God's will and this is heinous. 'Amr b. 'Ubaid relates that he was never worsted (in argument) as he was worsted by a Magian who travelled with him in a boat. 'Amr b. 'Ubaid asked him as to why he did not accept Islam. The Magian replied: because

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God did not will it. 'Amr said to the Magian that God willed that he should accept Islam but the devils did not leave him (freedom). The Magian replied that he preferred to remain with the stronger party. The M'utazilah believed that command entails will, while prohibition entails absence of will. Therefore, they thought that the faith of the disbeliever was willed by God but his disbelief was not so willed (by God)".

The next step of the Ash'arites was to downgrade man by comparison with the power and majesty of God. This was achieved through the denial of man's power to act without the express intervention of God. The M'utazilah had maintained that man's capacity to act existed before he accomplished any particular act. The Ash'arites held that this capacity of acting was an accident which God created in a being at the time when it intended to act in a particular way and that it did not exist before the act. Therefore, every act of man was really an acquisition of power to act from God who intervened from moment to moment and created the acts of the creature. The creature did not act. What he did was to acquire the act from God, because God was the creator not only of man but was also the creator of his acts. The Ash'arites believed that accidents could not subsist for more than a moment and since the power to act was also an accident, it perished as soon as the particular act was accomplished for which it had been created. The next moment, when another act was intended, God created again the power to act. This was the famous doctrine of Kasb or acquisition, according to which man really did nothing and accomplished nothing. He did not have even the power to act which belonged to God only, but he acquired the power at the moment when he intended to act in a particular manner.

The implications of the doctrine of 'Kasb' are very far reaching, because it entails the denial of the causal nexus between events. If there is no necessary connection between one act of a man and another, all acts become atomic in their nature and divine intervention becomes necessary from moment to moment. Ghazālī, among the Ash'arites, was the first to deny causation on philosophical grounds, but the denial was already implicit in the Ash'arite doctrine of Kasb. Thus, Ash'arī not only undermined the efficacy of the human agent, he rendered the whole scheme of science groundless. Therefore, Iqbāl is perfectly justified in concluding that while the M'utazilah saved nature at the expense of God, the Ash'arites "sacrificed nature to save God as conceived by the orthodox."[27]

It is clear that the main ground of dispute between the Ash'arite and the M'utazilah schools of thought was the question of man's freedom

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of the will as against the power of God. The M'utazilah solved the question by denying the power of God and affirming the free-will of man. But their solution was one-sided. Equally one-sided was the solution offered by Al-Ash'arī who denied the efficacy of the human will and held that everything in the world was determined by God. Man was therefore, left with no real freedom of choice. Regarding this, Dr. Faẓlur Raḥmān has made the acute remark that whereas in the hands of Ibn Ḥanbal the emphasis on the power and Majesty of God was a simple assertion of religious impulse, the later theologians like Al-Ash'arī, al-Mātrūdī and specially their successors transformed it into a full-fledged theological doctrine. "But their intellectual tools were no better than those of the M'utazilah and thus the doctrine developed one-sidedly in favour of determinism. A little later during the fourth and fifth centuries, the Muslim philosophers being pure rationalists, developed determinism still further and, by an identification of causal, rational and theistic forms of determinism, produced a truly imposing deterministic structure of the universe."[28]

But voices were not wanting in the orthodox camp itself which questioned the determinism of Al-Ash'arī and reaffirmed man's free-will. Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyah, for example, accuses a M'utazilah, al-Nāshī, that according to his doctrine, there would be acts, for which there is no agent and he goes on to say that this accusation is equally applicable to the doctrine propounded by Al-Ash'arī, for according to him, man is not the doer of his acts but God (because man only acquires the act which is created by God).[29] But if God had been its doer, its effects would have reverted to Him and names could have been derived for God from that act but this is impossible in the case of God. Therefore, it follows from Al-Ash'arī's argument that there are acts for which there is no doer.

Similarly, Ibn Taimiyah criticises[30] the Ash'arites for overlooking the distinction between the will, love and pleasure of God and for making all human beings equal in their relations to God, whether they commit good or evil. Ibn Taimiyah says that the Ash'arites are of the view that God loves disbelief and disobedience and is pleased with them.

In another place Ibn Taimiyah offers the following criticism[31] in respect of the extreme views held by the Ash'arites and the Ṣūfīs:—

> "It ought to be known that on this point many groups of Ahl-e-Kalām (theologians) and Ṣūfīs have erred and adopted a position which is actually worse than that of the M'utazilah and other upholders of the freedom of the will (which the theologians and Ṣūfīs had sought to remedy.) For, the upholders of the freedom of the will (at least)

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emphasize the command (of God *i.e.*, the moral imperative)..... and command good and forbid evil. But they were misled on the question of Divine Omnipotence and thought that the affirmation of a Universal Divine Will and Power....would rob[13] God of Justice and Wisdom—but they were mistaken. These were then confronted by a number of 'Ulama (*i.e.*, of the Orthodoxy), pious men and theologians and Ṣūfīs who affirmed the absolute Power of God....which was so far so good. But they let go the side of command and prohibition (*i.e.*, the moral side)....and became like those associationists (*Mushrikūn*) who (as the Qur'ān informs us) told the Prophet "If God had so willed, we would not have committed *shirk*....Therefore, although the M'utazilah did resemble the Zoroastrians in so far as they affirmed an agent other than God for what they believed to be evil, this other group resembled the Associationists (*Mushrikūn*), who are much worse than the Zoroastrians."

Leaving aside the question of Qadr or determination on which Ash'arī took a wrong stand in order to vindicate the power and majesty of God, he also considered it necessary to deny causation and in doing so he had the same end in view. If there is no causal nexus between events, he thought, God's power in regard to the world process would become more effective. But in this Ash'arī was mistaken.

Religion and God cannot be vindicated by denying that the course of human life is governed by causes and effects, for causation is one of the agencies through which God manages the world process and the chain of causes and effects is never so rigid as to exclude the operation of the divine will. The complexity of factors which govern man's life is so great that no event can be ascribed to a single cause. All evens take place when a number of causes converge together to produe an effect. But this convergence of causes does not take place automatically. There is a super-cause and a super-will through which the convergence comes about and that super-cause is God whose will envelops all other wills.

On this point we can do no better than quote Ibn Qayyim and see how the better minds of the Muslims—even of orthodox Muslims—reacted against the benumbing doctrine of Al-Ash'arī. Ibn Qayyim writes:—

"When men of wisdom saw that it is not possible to affirm the unity of God except by denying causation, they began to doubt the doctrine of Tauḥīd itself and entertain evil thoughts about him who brought it to mankind. But you do not find any book which has

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put greater emphasis on causes and effects than the Qur'ān. It makes one wonder when one thinks that God is the Creator of the causes and those things which are caused. And the causes and the things caused constitute the manner in which God's will and power operate in the universe. They are subservient to His Ḥikmah (wisdom). If He so desires, He can nullify a cause, as He nullified the power of the fire to burn His friend (Abraham) and the power of the water to drown a man in respect of Moses. Further, if He so desires, He can place obstacles in the path of (the operation of) causes which would prevent them from producing their effects."

When in spite of the extremism of Al-Ash'arī, his doctrines prevailed in the Muslim world and submerged those of the M'utazilah, the question that naturally comes to one's mind is how to explain this phenomenon. The answer is not simple. Ash'arī's doctrines prevailed, firstly, because they reaffirm the power of God which the tenets of the M'utazilah sought to undermine. Secondly, they contained a profound truth, namely, that God's wisdom is inscrutable in the ultimate analysis. The search for ultimate explanation will always remain unrewarding, because there is a mystery at the base of life which cannot be resolved by any rational process. But above all these things, stands the hard and undeniable fact to which Iqbāl has pointed.[33] *i.e.*, "Rationalism was an attempt to measure reality by reason alone; it implied the identity of the spheres of religion and philosophy and strove to express faith in the form of concepts or terms of pure thought."

NOTES

1. Iqbāl, Dr. Sir Muḥammad : *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Lahore, 1962, pp. 149, 150.
2. Iqbāl : *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, Lahore 1959, p. 61.
3. Iqbāl : Ibid., p. 61.
4. Dr. Faẓlur Raḥmān : *Islamic Methodology in History*, Karachi, 1965, p. 100.
5. H. S. Nyberg : *Introduction to Kitāb-al-Intiṣār-al-Radd 'Ala Ibn-al-Rāwindī* by Abul-Ḥusyan. b. 'Uthmān al-Khayyāṭ, Cairo, 1354 A.H., pp. 54, 55.
6. H. S. Nyberg : Ibid., pp. 54, 55.
7. H. S. Nyberg : Ibid., pp. 59, 60.
8. Iqbāl : *Metaphysics in Persia*, op. cit., p. 54.
9. Iqbāl : Ibid., p. 54.
10. Al-Baghdādī : *Mukhtasar-Kitāb-al-Farq Bain-al-Firaq*, Cairo, 1924, p. 104.
11. Al-Bāqilānī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ṭayyabī : *Kitāb-al-Tamḥīd*, Beirut, 1957, A.D., p. 253.
12. Iqbāl : *Metaphysics in Persia*, op. cit., p. 44.

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13. Al-Bāqilānī : op. cit., p. 254.
14. Al-Baghdādī : op. cit., p. 104.
15. Al-Bāqilāni : op. cit., p. 254.
16. Shahrastānī : *Al-Milal wa'l Naḥl*, Vol. I, Cairo. 1910, p. 108.
17. Al-Rāzī : *Mafātiḥ-al-Ghaib*, Vol. I, Cairo, 1354 A.H., p. 432.
18. Shahrastānī : op. cit., Vol. I, p. 135.
19. Ibn Ḥazm : *Al-Faṣl Fi-al-Milal Wal Ahwa wa'l Naḥl*, Cairo, 1320 A.H., pp. 126, 27.
20. Al-Ash'arī : *Maqalāt-al-Islamiyeen*, Vol. I, Cairo, 1369 A.H., p. 225.
21. Shahrastānī : *Al-Milal-wal Naḥl*, Vol. I, Cairo, 1369 A.H., p. 225.
22. Al-Taftāzānī, Sa'duddīn : *Sharḥ-al-'Aqā'id-al-Nasafiyah*, Cairo, N.D., p. 70.
23. Al-Taftāzānī : Ibid., p. 70.
24. Al-Ash'arī, Abī-al-Ḥasan : *Kitāb-al-Ibāna*, Hyderabad Deccan, 1367 (included in *Al-Rasā'il-al-Ṣaba' fi-al-'Aqā'id*), pp. 49, 50.
25. Sharastānī : *Al-Milal wa'l Naḥl*, Cairo, 1910, pp. 152, 153.
26. Al-Taftāzānī : op. cit., p. 101.
27. Iqbāl : *Metaphysics in Persia*, op. cit., p. 61
28. Dr. Faẓlur Raḥmān : op. cit., p. 101.
29. Ibn Qayyim-al-Jauzī : *Shafā'-al-'Alīl*, Cairo, N.D., p. 185.
30. Ibn Taimiyah : *Rasā'il*, Cairo, 1349, part V. p. 126.
31. Ibn Taimiyah : Ibid., p. 126.
32. Ibn Qayyim, op. cit., p. 261.
33. Iqbāl : *Metaphysics in Persia*, op. cit., p. 54.

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